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RE: C Docket No. 98-67, Ultratec's Petition for Clarification of and Cost Recovery for CapTel, An Enhanced VCO Service

Although I am filing these comments as a private citizen, I am also a founder of the Association of Late Deafened Adults-Los Angeles (ALDA-LA), and a member of the California Relay Service Advisory Committee (CRSAC) to the Deaf and Disabled Telecommunications Program of California (DDTP). I am a member of the committee who originally advised the Deaf and Disabled Telecommunications Program Advisory Committee (DDTPAC) to submit a positive recommendation for testing of Ultratec's new CapTel technology to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). That recommendation has been acted on favorably by the CPUC and testing is scheduled to begin approximately March 2003.

It is also important to have the FCC realize that I have personally used the CapTel device. As a late deafened adult who uses a Cochlear Implant to interact with the hearing world and has perfect speech **BUT** imperfect hearing, I found CapTel to be the "killer application" that us late deafened and hard of hearing individuals have been praying for in the voice-carry-over (VCO) services now available.

I have heard the argument that existing VCO relay service currently accomplishes the same hearing and reading together as CapTel's technology through the use of two-line VCO (2LVCO). Being a user of 2LVCO, I can state with authority that this statement is not true. My direct experience has been that Ultratec's Fastram system is far superior to having an agent physically typing the speaker's response for reading. The variations of the agents typing and listening skills are so wide-ranging, that each call I make through the current 2LVCO system, is an adventure into the unknown; one never knows what type of quality is going to happen using the existing 2LVCO system. Not to mention the challenge of comprehension due to the lag time between voice and text.

I firmly believe that Ultratec's CapTel device opens a new world to late deafened and hard of hearing individuals who can use their own voice while making a telephone call, but who have a problem either not hearing or are not completely sure of what they heard. The opportunities this opens in the workplace are staggering. One can use the phone in a professional matter without the current relay agents getting involved. With this technology, I will be finally able to make a seamless call without having the existing uncomfortable response from the hearing party that now happens.

I whole heartily agree that the Commission should grant Ultratec's request for CapTel to be eligible for reimbursement from the interstate TRS fund.

